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THE

BRITISH CRITIC,

FOR

JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL, MAY, JUNE.

MDCCCXII.

Suum igitur quiſque noſcat ingenium, acremque ſe et bonorum et vitiorum ſuorum Judicem præbeat. CICERO.

VOLUME XXXIX.

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PREFACE.

DURING that paroxyſm of BIBLOMANIA which was lately ſo prevalent in London, it was not, we believe, often aſked, what is the uſe or intrinſic value of ſuch a book, how far is it capable of affording inſtruction or delight:—but when was it printed? by whom? how many copies of it are known? If only one, two, or three, the value immediately roſe beyond all bounds; and the book brought ſuch a price, as the living author would ſcarcely have aſked for all his library, or all his works. Before his book is printed, every author can tell of one work at leaſt of which *only one perfect copy* exiſts, yet we do not hear that many of them have had ſuch offers for their hidden treaſures. Our buſineſs, however, is not ſtrictly with either of theſe claſſes. We treat not of ſcarce books, but of thoſe which, in the eſtimation of their authors, are rather too plentiful: and our preface is allotted to the recapitulation of works which, in our opinion never ought to be ſcarce; being calculated rather to benefit ſociety by their circulation, than to be hoarded up in choice cabinets, as the wonder of collectors.

DIVINITY.

It is ſomewhat extraordinary, that a Lecture which is annual ſhould be conſtantly ſupplied with preachers ſo able, as thoſe who have in general been appointed to that of Canon BAMPTON. To the calumniators of Oxford we would boldly oppoſe this fact, as a proof beyond all cavil, that the moſt important ſtudy, that of Theology, is there ſucceſsfully purſued. The liſt we gave in page 52 of this volume, of thirty Lecturers, who have performed that duty ſince the commencement of the inſtitution, affords a teſtimony to this aſſertion which cannot be repelled; and the thirty firſt Lecturer, *Mr. Falconer*, gives freſh value to it. The arguments adduced by him, in contradiction to the ſophiſtries of *Evanſon*, are ſuch as fixed our attention for a conſiderable time *, and will ſtand we doubt not, as a permanent bulwark to Goſpel truth. *Dr. Eveleigh*, whoſe name ranks high in the honourable liſt above-mentioned †, has now renewed and ſtrengthened his claims upon the public, by a ſet of diſcourſes ‡ equal at leaſt to the former, and no leſs acute than practical. The ſermons of *Mr. Davies*, of Biſhopſton, on *Church Union* ‖, harmonize admirably with other efforts which have lately been made, to throw light upon that important ſubject. We ſhall mention, under the head of Law, a work of no leſs merit by a layman. By theſe repeated efforts, we truſt it will be ſpon underſtood, as formerly it was, that a church is not an arbitrary thing, which any ſet of individuals may conſtitute; but a ſociety founded on divine authority, and endued with powers which man can neither aſſume nor abrogate. *Mr. Dixon's* very learned and acute diſcuſſions, on

* See No. I. p. 52. and II. p. 145.
† See A.D. 1792.
‡ No. III. p. 302.
‖ No. IV. 325.

the

the 68th and 110th *Pſalms*, well deſerve the attention of all who are verſed in Hebrew learning, and biblical criticiſm.

If ſermons are not a profitable ſpecies of publication, it may be doubted whether we ought rather to admire the public ſpirit, or lament the error, of a large part of the authors who ſupply them. We notice, in our prefaces, only thoſe which appear to be the beſt; yet theſe are always numerous, and in the preſent inſtance we have, what is unuſual, no other works in Divinity to mention. *Mr. Jeſſe's* *, *Mr. Warner's* †, and the ſecond volume of *Mr. Cooper's* practical diſcourſes ‡, ſtill remain upon our preſent liſt: and of theſe, (as their authors are not new to the public,) it may ſuffice to ſay, in this place, that they are equal, if not ſuperior to what they have produced before. Of *Dr. Valpy*, whoſe diſcourſes ‖ have in part appeared before, and in part are now firſt given, we have ſpoken in a mixed manner. Of his Divinity, with which we are here more particularly concerned, always well; of his opinions on ſome other ſubjects, with ſo much diſſent, as to take up the argument againſt them. Let the public judge between us. We are anxious only for truth and juſtice. The volume produced by the venerable *Biſhop of Durham* § conſiſts entirely of ſermons, charges, and tracts which have before been given to the public. To ſee them thus collected muſt be the wiſh of all who know their value; to give permanence to ſuch productions, and to render them eaſily acceſſible, is to do a real ſervice to the public.

Smaller publications in theology we have uſually claſſed together. We begin at preſent with the *two diſcourſes* of *Mr. D'Oyly* ¶ publiſhed officially, in

* No. III. p. 314. † No. V. p. 535. ‡ No. III. p. 315.
‖ No. V. p. 504. and VI. p. 609. § No. I. p. 91.
¶ No. V. p. 458.

the honourable ſituation of Chriſtian advocate, at Cambridge. The ſubjects are important, the diſcuſſion of them well-timed, and ſo able as fully to juſtify the appointment which the author holds. The firſt is on a particular providence, a doctrine much abuſed by enthuſiaſts; and the ſecond againſt Unitarianiſm, the prevailing faſhion of thoſe who would, without its aid have been Deiſts. *Dr. Gray's Sermon* *, on the atrocious aſſaſſination of Mr. Perceval, breathes at once the ſpirit of patriotiſm and of piety: while the juſtice which it does to the exalted character of the miniſter, increaſes our abhorrence of that political frenzy which could any where, even for a moment, exult in ſuch a crime. The friends of National Education will of courſe rejoice to ſee *the Dean of Worceſter* enliſted in the number of its public advocates, and will read the diſcourſe, preached by him at his viſitations †, with admiration of the ſoundneſs of his arguments and the liberality of his views. Other good ſermons and tracts we have noticed in our progreſs through this volume; but the above, without diſparaging the others, deſerve to be particularly brought to recollection.

History.

Among the moſt curious documents illuſtrative of Hiſtory are the letters of remarkable perſonages, and thoſe of *Tippoo Sultan*, tranſlated by *General Kirkpatrick* ‡, are as ſtrongly characteriſtic of the writer as any which have ever appeared. They would teſtify their own genuineneſs, even if the channel through which they came were leſs reſpectable. But we muſt turn from the tranſactions of the Eaſt to thoſe of regions nearer home. *The Reform-*

* No. VI. p. 646. † As *Archdeacon of Berks*. No. VI. p. 647.
‡ No. I. p. 60. continued from Vol. 38. p. 556.

ation

ation of Religion *in Scotland* had never found an historian so accurate or so impartial as it deserved, till *Dr. Cook*, of Laurence-kirk took up the task *. That he has executed it to our satisfaction, and to his own credit, is testified by the articles which we have published on the subject. If we did not always adopt his opinions, we no where found occasion to censure the historian. *Mr. Bigland* takes us to *Spain* †, and in a well digested narrative gives us the result of its most authentic histories. As the theatre of British glory may it employ the pens of future historians! The history of our own country we see for the second time undertaken by a foreigner; the model is French, borrowed from the celebrated abridgement of Henault; to which, if *M. Bertrand de Moleville* ‡, had more closely adhered, his work would have been still more valuable. It is, however, a creditable performance, and we hope will gain the author emolument as well as praise. From the history of England, we descend to the history of a single Festival ‖, which, however, *Mr. Lysons* has contrived to render interesting, by his mode of treating it. He has connected it with the history of the provision for the parochial clergy, of which it points out the deficiencies, in a striking manner.

Topography and Antiquities.

The close of an extensive and valuable work is an epocha in bibliographical annals, and to this point we have now brought the copious and very curious *history of Leicestershire*, the work of *Mr. John Nichols* §. Its beginnings were coincident with our seventh volume, and its conclusion with our thirty-

* No. II. p. 213. and V. 459. † No. III. p. 312.
‡ No. VI. p. 592. ‖ *The Meeting of the Choirs of Gloucester, Worcester, and Hereford.* See No. VI. p. 574. § No. VI. p. 618.

ninth; a long and laborious progreſs. But our wiſhes for its ſucceſs are already ſuperfluous. It ranks, even now, not only among the beſt, but even the ſcarceſt works on Britiſh Topography. In the mean time, the ſame indefatigable exertion has given new life to the *Worthies of Fuller* *, and has enriched thoſe uſeful volumes by many judicious additions. In purſuing the progreſs of the † *Aſiatic Reſearches* we have again had occaſion to notice the frauds of the Brahmins, in copying the events of the hiſtory of Chriſt. From theſe forged records, we turn with pleaſure to the other contents of the volume; and rejoice to ſee the work continued with ſpirit and ability. Of *Dr. Hales's* elaborate ſyſtem of *Chronology* ‡, we have yet examined only the beginning. But from this we augur well of the reſt, and expect to find our labour fully compenſated by the peruſal. Compared with theſe reſearches into the beginnings of time, literary antiquities ſeem perfectly modern. Yet they have their uſe as well as their attraction; both of which will doubtleſs be acknowledged by thoſe who ſhall examine *Mr. Beloe's* work upon the ſubject ‖.

Travels, and Geography.

It belongs to the North Americans, certainly, to explore the Weſtern parts of their own continent, and difficult as the reſearch is, they have not been unſucceſsful in it. *Major Pike* is the lateſt of their travellers, and was ſent officially to explore §. His work has been republiſhed here, and contains much novel information. Into the regions of Greece, a

* No. III. p. 283. † No. I. p. 1. and No. III. p. 261.
‡ No. VI. p. 549. ‖ *Anecdotes of Literature and ſcarce books.* Vol. 5 No. III. p. 251. The 6th is now completed at the preſs, and is to be the laſt. § No. II. p. 118.

never-

never-failing ſource of gratification to claſſical readers, we are again conducted by *Mr. Gell* *. To future travellers the information contained in this *Itinerary* will be of material ſervice. A very different Archipelago from that of Greece is deſcribed by *Mr. Landt*, the remote iſlands of *Feroe* or *Ferro* †, ſubject to Denmark, and lying between Iceland and the Shetland Iſles. A reſidence of ſeveral years enabled the author to make more exact obſervations than had hitherto been made, and, as correct accounts are always valuable, his book undoubtedly deſerved to be tranſlated, humble as the ſubject of his narrative may be eſteemed. Even the little iſland of *Heligoland* (or *Helgoland*, as there printed) has at length found a deſcriber ‡, and the account is ſo far curious, as it differs from any thing which can be ſeen in other places; or perhaps even there, ſince the change of its political connections.

Of the Spaniſh colonies in the Weſt Indies, and on the neighbouring continent, a ſatisfactory account is given by *Mr. Walter* ‖, who was there in an official capacity. The work is of a kind which muſt be acceptable, though the addition which it makes to our previous knowledge may not be very extenſive. The Geography of the ancient World has never had a more profound inveſtigator than the celebrated *D'Anville*, and that his abridged ſyſtem ſhould now for the firſt time make its appearance in our language §, is not a little extraordinary. It is however to be welcomed as an uſeful book.

POLITICS.

The able work of *Captain Paſley* ¶, is perhaps more ſtrictly military than political, yet to adopt

* No. III. p. 235. † No. II. p. 169. ‡ No. VI. p. 653.
‖ No. II. p. 199. § Ibid. ¶ No. V. p. 482. and VI. p. 598.

or

or reject it, wholly or in parts must be the office of the profound politician. Astonished at the boldness of many of its views, we have endeavoured to give at least a candid account of it; the rest we leave to those who are more able or more authorized to decide upon it. The speech of *Mr. Wellesley Pole*, on the subject of *Ireland* *, developes, in our opinion, some remarkable political manœuvres. We mention it therefore again, for the further consideration of our readers. So barren, in the present volume, has been our political harvest.

LAW.

Though ecclesiastical law has not often been within our contemplation, when we have entered upon this article of our preface, we purposely open it at present with a work intended to develope the foundations of that law. This is *Mr. Barwick's Treatise on Church government* †, than which a better digested or better argued tract has not often appeared. We place it here, to render it the more conspicuous; as we would not omit any effort in our power to make it the object of attention. On its circulation more may depend than the superficial observer would suspect. We turn, however, to the more general walks of law.

Here then, our first homage is due to the able work of *Mr. Cruise* on *Dignities* and *Titles* of *Honour* ‡. The subject is curious in itself, and is treated by him with successful investigation and clear arrangement. Extremely useful, as works of legal study or practical reference, are three which we noticed together: *Mr. Ballantyne* on the *Statute of Limita-*

* No. IV. p. 421. † No. III. p. 288.
‡ No. II. p. 153.

tions,

tions *, *Mr. Disney*, on acts relative to *Elections* †, and *Mr. Lawes*, on pleading in *Assumpsit* ‡. The practitioner who may be led to these by our commendation of them will we think feel grateful for the intimation. More elaborate and extensive is the work on *Wills and Codicils* produced by *Mr. Roberts* ‖. a subject of importance to all who have or who expect property; yet how imperfectly understood, even in the profession may be testified by the wills of many practical lawyers. On the bill intended to regulate the keeping of *Parish Registers Mr. Partridge of Boston* has twice published §; we trust that, by these and other efforts, the law will at length be made at once beneficial to the public, and not injurious to individuals. That such was the intention of the framers of it, from the first, we see no cause to doubt.

Philosophy and Arts.

The tale of a petrified city has often amused the lovers of wonder, but the philosopher actually leads us into a petrified world. In three volumes quarto, which might easily have been extended to twice the number, *Mr. Parkinson* ¶ has given us first the vegetable, and since the animal remains of a former state of this globe, as they are found in a fossil state. It is not easy to imagine a more curious work, and the plates by which it is illustrated are of the most elegant and accurate execution.

But there are some to whom the arts invented by man are more attractive than the wonders of nature. They had rather have the history of the art which represents the fossils, than that of the specimens themselves; and the truth is that the mind may be beneficially em-

* No. I. p. 86. † Ib. p. 87. ‡ Ib. p. 88.
‖ No. IV. p. 409. § No. I. p. 90. and No. III. p. 311.
¶ No. V. p. 437. and VI. p. 580.

ployed

ployed in both ſpeculations. To the latter claſs, therefore, we ſhall recommend *Mr. Opie's* excellent, though unfiniſhed, *Lectures* on *Painting* * ; with the very intereſting accounts of the man, given by his widow and his friends. Nor will the tract of *Mr. Landſeer*, ſhort as it is, on the proper mode of encouraging the art of *Engraving* †, be found unworthy of notice. In the long diſputed queſtion of the origin of the ſtyle of architecture uſually called *Gothic*, recourſe muſt be had to two works, the arguments of which the judicious reader will balance for himſelf. Theſe are the poſthumous work of *Mr. Whittington*, publiſhed by Lord Aberdeen, now preſident of the Society of Antiquaries: and the ſmaller but elegant work of *Dr. Milner:* the former treating on the Architecture of *France*, the latter on that of *England*, at the ſame period. They were deſcribed by us together ‡. The collection of *Eſſays*, named *the Artiſt*, being the work chiefly of real *artiſts* ‖, will be highly acceptable to the enlightened critic and connoiſſeur: and proves an attention to the theory of art which muſt have beneficial effects. The edition of the works of *Hogarth*, as collected and deſcribed by *Mr. Nichol's* §, cannot fail to be welcomed by the public. The popularity of that original and truly moral artiſt is not likely to decline.

MEDICINE.

The works in this claſs at preſent to be mentioned, though not large, are valuable, and ſome of the beſt are in the department of the Surgeon. Such is clearly the important volume of *Mr. Home* on the diſeaſes of the *Proſtate Gland* ¶, a work, in ſome reſpects, of diſcovery, and in all of ſound infor-

* No. V. p. 514.
† No. VI. p. 650.
‡ No. II. p. 160.
‖ No. IV. p. 366.
§ No. I. p. 70.
¶ No. II. p. 112.

mation.

mation. The tract of *Mr. Trye* on the operation for the Stone *, and that of *Dr. Hutchinson* on the *Popliteal Aneurism* †, are well entitled to attention from practitioners. *Dr. Alley's* judicious volume on *Hydrargyria* ‡, a peculiar disease arising from the use of Mercury, throws much light upon a subject hitherto but little investigated. *Dr. Lempriere* details the virtues of a fine Chalybeate lately discovered in a place where every other natural aid to health had always existed in perfection, namely, in the *Isle of Wight* ‖. The valetudinary visitant, exhausted either by business or dissipation, will doubtless take advantage of this discovery.

Poetry.

We are here in a fertile region, and the harvest is very pleasing. The most popular of the late productions is *Childe Harold*, the unfinished poem of *Lord Byron* §. Nor shall we deny that it deserves its popularity; though the absurdity of founding a description of modern persons, places, and manners, on a kind of ancient tale, is so glaring as to be almost unaccountable. The ingenuity of the poet who at all surmounts this difficulty must be extraordinary, and Lord Byron does in fact surmount it, in a great degree, by an irresistible flow of elegant verse, animated description, and original sentiment. We should be glad if we could say as much for *Mr. Southey*, whose wild rhapsody, *Kehama* ¶, if too ingenious to be wholly omitted, is certainly too absurd to be praised. It is exactly the profusion of a spendthrift, who wastes his wealth, merely for the gratification of his vanity, in things which can neither benefit himself nor others. The remains of *Blacket* ** and *Worgan* †† excite a melancholy pleasure; though

* No. V. p. 528. † No. V. p. 529. ‡ No. III. p. 313.
‖ No. VI. p. 639. § No. V. p. 473. ¶ No. III. p. 272.
** No. II. p. 185. †† No. III. p. 305.

beyond

beyond all doubt, an early death, with pious resignation, ought in reason to be thought much happier than a life which was to depend for support upon the breath of public favour, and the penurious profits of authorship. The number of minor poets, who deserve some praise, though they cannot be highly extolled, is too great for enumeration. They must be sought in the first section of our Monthly Catalogues, where they will with ease be found. Several indeed are anonymous; as the Poem on *the Wye* *, the collection called *Metrical Effusions* †, and others; and when the authors come forward with their names they shall meet with more attention. *Mr. Jerningham*, as an established bard, may expect some mention of his *Farewel* ‡; and in truth they must have little feeling, who regret not the final departure even of a mere acquaintance. We return therefore Farewel, for his farewel! and wish him all the fame to which he can aspire. The reader will find some ingenious poetry, particularly Latin poetry, in the third volume of *Mr. Skinner's posthumous Works* ‖. We did not mention the former volumes, under Divinity, because though we esteem the learning we do not receive the system of the author.

The collections of our national Poetry are now becoming numerous, but no one hitherto has united so many advantages as that which was conducted by *Mr. Chalmers* §. The important additions to the collection, the beauty of the paper and type, but above all the highly valuable biographical additions, stamp a value upon the edition which can hardly be too highly estimated. The Editor's fame as a biographical writer is daily increasing, by the publication of the completest work of that kind that has ever yet been produced ¶. A neat edition of the poetry of

* No. V. p. 523. † No. VI. p. 635. ‡ No. I. p. 77.
‖ No. IV. p. 334. § No. I. p. 18. and II. p. 167.
¶ "The General Biographical Dictionary." Three volumes are now published (July) which afford a sufficient pledge for the excellence of the whole.

Burns,

Burns, with ſome conſiderable additions *, is alſo worthy of notice. Of the engraved illuſtrations, the comic are the beſt; and ſome of them of uncommon merit.

Novels.

With the periodical manufacture of novels, deſtined to ſupply the the liſtleſs reading of ſummer wanderers, we do not profeſs to meddle. Now and then an exempt caſe demands our notice. Such have we found *Miſs Hawkins's* production, entitled the *Counteſs and Gertrude*†, which, though diſfigured by ſome minor blemiſhes, contains enough of ingenuity and original thought, to ſet up twenty novel-ſpinners. Though we cannot equally commend the production of *Mrs. Opie*, entitled *Temper* ‡, we do not feel inclined to paſs it by in ſilence. There are authors who, when they write below themſelves, ſtill ſurpaſs the multitude; and that this lady is of the number will hardly be denied. We by no means counſel *Mr. Card* to continue in this line of authorſhip; his former productions being of a better kind: but in his *Beauford* ‖ there will be found ſufficient merit to reward the peruſal, and a fair proportion of originality.

Miscellanies.

To the anonymous author of the paper entitled *the Projector* §, we own ourſelves indebted for much of liberal amuſement. We felt continually the force of the claſſical queſtion,

* No. II. p. 132. † No. I. p. 39. ‡ No. V. p. 526.
‖ No. VI. p. 571. § No. III. p. 294.

——————ridentem dicere verum
Quid vetat?

for, with all the livelineſs of the author, he never fails to inſtruct; and his lucubrations are always of the moſt beneficial tendency. In the American Eſſays entitled *Salmagundi* * there is more of buffoonery, and leſs of ſolidity; but it it may gratify curioſity to ſee how the eſſayiſts of this country are imitated beyond the Atlantic. *Mr. Gilchriſt's* letter to *Mr. Gifford* † is worthy of remark, from the ſoundneſs of its arguments and the liberality of its object. We truſt alſo that its object will be attained, and that the fair fame of honeſt Old Ben will no longer require protection.

During the preſent laudable deſire to improve the education of the poor, we cannot recommend our readers to a better ſource of information, than *Sir Thomas Bernard's* Account of the *Barrington School* ‡; a ſeminary eſtabliſhed by the liberality and ſupported by the protection of the Biſhop of Durham. The patriotic and truly chriſtian zeal of the worthy prelate and his friend is never relaxed, and the poor will long be bound to bleſs their various efforts.

Our taſk muſt here terminate: and we pauſe with the ſenſation, which we have often felt, that of all the exertions of Criticiſm none is ſo gratifying, nor in fact ſo uſeful to the mind, as the beſtowing of praiſe, where praiſe has been well deſerved. It is uſeful alſo to the perſons commended.

——————non parvas animo dat gloria vires,
Et facunda facit pectora laudis amor.

* No. II. p. 206. † No. V. p. 539. ‡ No. V. p. 500.

TABLE

OF

BOOKS REVIEWED IN VOLUME XXXIX.

N. B. For remarkable Passages in the Criticisms and Extracts, see the INDEX at the End of the Volume.

A.

PAGE

ADDRESS to People of England — 420
Alley, Dr. George, on Hydrargyria — — 313
Aneurism, Dr. Hutchinson on 529
Anti-rosa on the Register Bill 419
Arnot, Hugh, to British Nation — — 532
Artist the, a Collection of Essays — — 366
Asiatic Researches, Vol. IX. 1, 261
Assumpsit, E. Lawes on 88

B.

Balfour, Dr. Francis, on Sol-Lunar influence — 418
Ballantyne Wm. on the Statute of Limitations — 86
Bampton Lectures, Falconer's 52, 145
Bankruptcy, Rose's Reports on 448
Barber, William, on Farm-buildings — 531
Barker, E. H. Two Tracts of Cicero, edited by 350
Barrow, Rev. Dr. on Alms-giving — — 92
Barry, Rev. Dr. Edward, Æsculapian Monitor 198
Barwick, Edward, on the Church — — 288
Beauford, Card's, a novel 571
Bell's Schools, Ethelston on 538
Bell, Wm. Guide to the Stream of Time — — 541
Beloe's Anecdotes, Vol. V. 251
Belsham on the Divinity of Christ — 18, 126

Bernard,

PAGE

Bernard, Sir Thomas, on the Barrington School - 500
Bible Society, Marsh on 174
——— Lister and Gisborne's Speeches on 537
Bigland, John, History of Spain — — 312
Blacket, Joseph, Remains of 185
Boardman, J. Vocabulary of Seven Languages 318
Bonner, C. Institution for Blind Persons — 94
Bourbon, account of the conquest of the isle of 651
Bowles, William, on the Merino Sheep — — 85
Bradley, C. Phædri Fabulæ 205
Brichan, Dr. David, Sermons, Vol. II. — 534
British Scenery, Poetical Sketch of — — 191
British Spy, Letters of 651
Browne, Dr. Thomas, Pinacotheca Classica — 650
Bullion Debate, W. Pitt's 81
Buonaparte, Confession of, by Sarrazin — — 381
Burges, George, on Catholic Emancipation — 649
Burns, Robert, Poems by, Edinburgh Edition of 139
Byerly, J. S. Machiavel's Prince by — 420
Byron, Lord, Childe Harold's Pilgrimage — 478

C.

Calvinism, Pott's, remarks on the Refutation of 398
Campbell, D. G. Poems by 636
Caracas, Sketch of the 541
Card, Henry, Beauford, a novel — — 571
Catalonia, a Poem — 195
Chalmers, Al. Esq. Edition of English Poets — 12
Channing, W. E. Fast Sermon in America — 94
Childe Harold, Lord Byron's 478
Child's Sunday Book 648
Christians, a Quaker's Address to — — 587
Chronological History of England, Moleville's 592
Chronology, Dr. Hales's New 549
Church Government, Barwick on — — 288
Cicero de Senectute et Amicitia, Barker's Edition — 350
Clark, Zachary, on Charities in Norfolk — 208
Clark, Bracey, on Horses' Foot 638
Clergy, Reflections of a farmer on — — 317
Commander in Chief, Arminius on — — 633
Conferences, at Tranquebar 203
Cook, Dr. George, History of Reformation in Scotland 213, 459
Cooper, Rev. Ed. Practical Sermons, Vol. II. — 315
Courteney, Rev. John, on the Register Bill — 419
Crabb, George, German Extracts — — 654
Cruise, Wm. Esq. on Dignities 153
Curse of Kehama, Southey's 272

D.

Daniel, George, Miscellaneous Poems — — 415

D'Anville's

PAGE

D'Anville's Geography translated — — 199
Daubeny, Rev. Archdeacon, Letter to Mr. Rose 419
Davies, Rev. Edw. Discourses on Church Union — 325
Despotism, or the Fall of the Jesuits — — 82
Diary of a Lover of Literature, Extracts from — 101
Disney, John, Collection of Acts of Parliament — 87
Dixon, Rev. Richard, on 68th Psalm — — 443
Dobell, S. Floweret for the Wreath of Humanity 307
Dryden, Poetical Works of, by Warton — 361
Durham, Bishop of, his Tracts collected — — 91

E.

Education, observations on 654
Elegantiæ Latinæ, Rev. E. Valpy's — 536
England, Address to People of 420
Ethelston, Rev. C. W. on Bell's Schools — — 538
Eveleigh, Dr. John, Sermons 302
Eugene, Prince, introduction to his Memoirs — 541
Eugenio, Poems of — 416
Extracts from Diary of a Lover of Literature — 101

F.

Falconer, Rev. Thomas, Bampton Lectures 52, 145
Faussett, Rev. Godfrey, Sermon on Education 231
Fenelon on Education of Daughters, translated — 541

PAGE

Feroe Islands, Landt on the 169
Ford, Rev. Dr. Thomas, Assize Sermon — 200
France, Plumptre's Residence in 339
Freston, Rev. A. Six Sermons by — — 532
Fuller, Dr. Thomas, his Worthies republished — 283

G.

Gardner, Laurence, Sermon on Education — 423
Gell, W. Esq. Itinerary of Greece — — 235
Generative System, Roberton on Diseases of — 626
Gilchrist, Octavius, Letter on Weber's Ford — 539
Gillies, Dr. John, Seymour's Edition of his Life of Whitefield — — 654
Gisborne, Rev. Thomas, Speech at Stafford — 537
Glasse, Dr. on the imitation of Christ — — 316
Glenochel, Kennedy's, a Poem 77
Gloucester, Lysons on the Music Meetings at — 574
Golden Wedding Ring 540
Gothic Architecture, Whittington and Milner on 160
Graham, Rev. John, Sermon on Preaching the Word 424
Grant, Johnson, History of English Church, Vol. I. 422
Gray, Rev. Robert, Discourse on Mr. Perceval 646
Green, Mrs. Good Men of modern date — — 311
Grisanthwaite, Wm. Sleep, a Poem — — 415

Hales's

H.

PAGE
Hales's Rev. Dr. W. New Analysis of Chronology 549
Hallaran, Dr. W. S. on Insanity — — 388
Hampson, Rev. John, Sermons from Old Testament 313
Hamstead, J. Esq. on Nature 48
Harvey, Jane, Progress of an Author — — 310
Hawkins, Lætitia Matilda, Countess and Gertrude 39
Heligoland, Island, account of 653
Hill, Eliz. Sequel to Poetical Monitor — — 79
Hints to all Classes 199
Hippolytus, Monk's Edition of — — 559
Hoare, Prince, Esq. Edition of the Artist — 366
Hofland, Mrs. Season at Harrogate — — 631
Hogarth, Genuine Works of 70
Home, Everard, Esq. on the Prostate Gland — 112
Hornsey, John, New Young Man's Companion 652
Hortus Elginensis, by Hosack 425
Hutchinson, Dr. A. C. on Aneurism — — 529
Hydrargyria, Dr. Alley on 313

I and J.

I says, says I, a novel 418
I'll consider of it, novel 637
Jerningham, Edward, Esq. Old Bard's Farewell — 77
Jesse, Rev. W. Sermons on the Redeemer — — 314
Ingram, Wm. Poems in English and Scottish — 634
Insane Persons, Dr. Hallaran on — — 388

PAGE
Jodrell, R. P. jun. Carmina selecta — 308
Jones, Thomas, Scripture Directory — — 203
Ireland, Mr. Wellesley Pole's Speech on — — 421
Juvenal, Specimens of a new translation of — 307

K.

Keegan, W. New Dialogues 426
Kennedy, James, Glenochel, a Poem — — 77
Kirkpatrick, Gen. Letters of Tippoo — — 60

L.

La Voix de la Nature 419
Lawes, Edw. Practical Treatise on Assumpsit — 88
Le Noir, French Orator 542
Landseer, John, Letter on Engraving — — 650
Landt, Rev. G. on the Feroe Islands — — 169
Lea, W. on Algebraic Equations — — 521
Leicestershire, Nichols's, concluded — — 618
Lempriere, Dr. Wm. on Chalybeate in Isle of Wight 639
Letter on the Inquisition, from the Spanish — 205
Lister, Thomas, Esq. Speech of at Stafford — 536
Loose Papers — 309
Lucas, Rev. Charles, Joseph a Poem — — 180
Lysons, Rev. Dan. on Gloucester Music Meetings 574

Machiavel

M.

PAGE
Machiavel his Prince, by Byerly — — 420
Marriage, Mayor of Petersfield on — — 542
Marsh, Dr. Herbert, on the Bible Society — 174
Martin, James, Translations from Irish Manuscripts 79
Merriman, Dr. Samuel, on Retroversion — 642
Metrical Effusions 635
Milesian Chief, the, a Romance 197
Milner, Rev. Dr. on Ecclesiastical Architecture 160
Modern Wonders 190
Moleville, A. F. Bertrand de, History of Great Britain 592
Monk, Professor, Edition of Hippolytus — 559
Montalban, a Tragedy 196
Moore, Rev. Charles, Sermon on Personal Reform 203
Morley, Rev. John, on National Depravity 423
Mosely, Dr. Heroic Epistle to 525

N.

National Education, Tract on 90
Newton, J. Frank, Return to Nature — — 641
Nichols, John, his Edition of Hogarth — — 70
——, ——, Leicestershire, Part 7, and last 618
Night, a Poem — 306

O.

Onslow, Rev. Arthur, Dean of Worcester, Visitation Sermon — 642
PAGE
Opie, John, Lectures, with his Memoirs — — 514
—— Mrs. Temper, a novel 526
Orateur François, Le Noir's 542
Orgar, Thomas, Ovid's Metamorphoses, No. 1. 192

P.

Parkinson, James, Organic Remains, Vol. II. and III. 437, 580
Partridge, Rev. S. on Improved Register Bill — 89
——————. on Parish Registers — 311
Pasley, Capt. C. M. on British Empire — 482, 598
Patrick, Rev. R. Chart of Ten Numerals — 595
Paul St. Epistles paraphrased 647
Perceval, R. H. Spencer, Poem to — — 417
——————— Sermon on his Death 646
——————— Remarks on his Assassination 652
Petersfield, Mayor of, on Marriage — 542
Philips, Charles, Consolations of Erin — 309
Pike, Zebulun, Montgomery, Travels of — 118
Pinacotheca classica, Browne's 650
Pindar, Lee's Edition of 629
Pitt, William, the Bullion Debate — — 81
Plaintive, Paul, Life and Adventures of — 81
Planquais, Thomas, Spanish Grammar — 539
Pleasures of Human Life, &c. by Miss Vardill — 414
Plumptre, Anne, Three Years Residence in France 339

Plumptre,

PAGE

Plumptre, Rev. James, on the Stage — — 648
Poets, Chalmers's 12,167
Poetical Monitor, Sequel to 79
Pole, Rt. Hon. W. Wellesley, Speech on Ireland 421
Pornin, A. F. L'interieur de Rome — 82
Potemkin, Prince, Memoirs of 94
Pott, Rev. Archdeacon, Remarks by — 398
Pratt, Mr. Edition of Blacket 185
Progress of Arts and Sciences, a Poem — 310
Projector, a periodical Paper 294

Q.

Quaker's Address to Christians 587

R.

Reflections by a Layman and Farmer — 317
Reformation in Scotland, Cook's History of — 213,459
Register Bill, Partridge on 311
——— Daubeny, Courtenay, and Anti-rosa on 419
Renmore, Maid of, a Poem 80
Ring, John, on the Gout 74
Roberton, John, on Diseases 626
Roberts, Wm. Isaac, Poems and Letters by — 193
——— Wm. Esq. on Wills and Codicils — 409
Romilly, Sir Sam. on Criminal Law — 230,370
Rosary, or Beads of Love 524
Rose, Edw. the Sea-Devil 197
Rose, Geo. Reports on Cases of Bankruptcy — 448

PAGE

Rudge, Rev. James, Sermon on Sacrament — 200

S.

Salmagundi, American by Lancelot Langstaff — 206
Sarrazin, General, Confession of Buonaparte — 381
Scottish Hospital, Dr. R. Young's Sermon for 535
Scripture Directory, Jones's 203
Sense and Sensibility, a novel 527
Sermons, abridged, by Mrs. Trimmer — — 644
Sermons, five practical 645
Seymour, A. C. Edition of Life of Whitefield 654
Sharpe, Rev. J. Fast Sermon 533
Sharp, Granville, on Matthew xvi. 18. — 643
Skinner, Rev. John, Works of 334
Sleep, a Poem, by Grisanthwaite — — 415
Southey, Robert, Curse of Kehama — — 272
Stage, Mr. Plumptre's, Inquiry into its lawfulness 648
Steers, W. Leisure Hours 79
Stone, Trye on Cutting for 527
Stream of Time, Strass's translated — — 541
Swammerdam, M. G. Life of Paul Plaintive — 81

T.

Temple, Laura Sophia, Poems by — — 413
Things by right names, a novel — — 637
Tippoo Sultan, Letters of, concluded — — 60

Tocsin,

PAGE
Tocsin, the, and Minor Poems 191

Translations.

——— of Tippoo's Letters, by Kirkpatrick — 60
——— Martin's from Irish Manuscripts — 79
——— Bowles on Merino Sheep — — 85
——— Life of Prince Potemkin — — 94
——— Landt on Feroe Islands — 169
——— Ovid's Metamorphoses, by Orgar 192
——— D'Anville's Geography — — 199
——— Letter on the Inquisition — 205
——— Juvenal, specimens of — — 307
——— Sarrazin's Confession of Buonaparte 381
——— Machiavel's Prince, by Byerly 420
——— Strass's Stream of Time — — 541
——— Fenelon on Education — — 541
——— Pindar, Lee's Edition of — 630
Trimmer, Mrs. Sermons abridged by — 644
Trye, Charles Brandon, on cutting for the Stone 527

V. and U.

Valpy, Rev. Dr. Sermons 504, 609

PAGE
——— E. Elegantiæ Latinæ — 539
Vardill, Anna Jane, Poem by 414

W.

Walter, Wm. on Spanish Colonies — — 206
Warner, Rev. Richard, Sermons on Scripture Characters 535
Warton, Rev. Jos. Edition of Dryden's Poems 361
Weber's Edition of Ford, Gilchrist on — 539
Whateley, Thomas, on an Affection of the Tibia 530
Whitefield, Rev. George, Memoirs of, second edition 653
Whittington, G. D. on Gothic Architecture — 160
Wight, Isle, Chalybeate in 639
Worcester, Dean of, Visitation Sermon — — 642
Worgan, John Dawes, Poems by 305
Wye, River, and other Poems 523

Y.

Young, Dr. Robert, Sermon for Scottish Hospital 535

Z.

Zaragossa, Temple's, Siege of, and other Poems 413